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cussion is sure to be provoked as to the relation between the view here pronounced and real freedom of investigation, and further as to the place of authoritative creeds in a living church.

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THE DIVINE NAMES IN GENESIS. JOHN SKINNER, M.A., D.D. Hodder & Stoughton. 1914. Pp. viii, 303.

ELOHIM AUSSERHALB DES PENTATEUCH; GRUNDLEGUNG ZU EINER UNTERSUCHUNG ÜBER DIE GOTTESNAMEN IM PENTATEUCH. Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten Testament, herausgegeben von Rudolph Kittel. Heft 19. FRIEDRICH BAUMGÄRTEL, Lic. Theol. J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung. 1914. Pp. viii, 90.

Professor Skinner's book, in the main a reprint of articles which appeared in the *Expositor* during 1913, is a defence of the current "documentary theory" of the Pentateuch against the attacks of Dahse, the most pretentious of its recent assailants. In a number of publications, beginning in 1903 and extending to 1914, the most elaborate of which is his *Textkritische Materialien zur Hexateuchfrage* (Giessen, 1912), Dahse has vigorously championed the contention first put forward by Klostermann some twenty years ago, that the documentary theory is untenable, because it is based on the occurrences of the names Yahwe and Elohim in the Masoretic text, which latter, it is alleged, the Septuagint shows to be utterly corrupt and unreliable precisely in respect to those names.

In spite of some provocation to the contrary from Dahse's pugnacious ally, H. L. Wiener, Skinner maintains an attitude of courtesy and good nature, endeavoring to state his opponents' positions with lucidity and fairness, and avoiding objectionable personalities, though he writes with a vivacity that we do not ordinarily associate with English theologians. The book is good reading, and will give to any student of the Old Testament who happens to be ignorant of the subject matter and merits of this controversy, a very fair idea of both. For the rest, it is gratifying to find an English writer on the Old Testament taking for granted that persons interested in a discussion of this character will understand German, although, oddly enough, the book contains more than the usual amount of elementary information.

The author has no difficulty in showing (1) that, as matters stand today, whatever might have been the case 150 years ago, the only effect of the complete demonstration of Dahse's contentions regard-

ing the Masoretic tradition would be to make a trifle more uncertain the admittedly uncertain (and relatively unimportant) analysis of the so-called JE sections into their supposed constituent elements J and E; (2) that, in point of fact, Dahse's contentions are very far from being demonstrated, the aggregate effect of his efforts being rather to justify the customary neglect of the Septuagintal testimony as to the divine names; and (3) that his attempt to substitute for the documentary theory a constructive hypothesis of his own, to account for the phenomena exhibited by both the Greek and Hebrew texts of the Pentateuch, is fantastic in the extreme and hardly worth the serious consideration of scholars.

There are, of course, numerous points of detail on which individual students of the Old Testament will differ from the author, and some on which he is clearly mistaken. That the completed Pentateuch dates from 444 B.C., is an opinion which is being increasingly abandoned; the Pentateuch, like its counterpart the Synagogue, was the product, not the cause of the Restoration. Παντοκράτωρ is not "the usual rendering in the LXX of *Sebaoth*" (p. 108, footnote); it is the usual rendering only in the Minor Prophets. The Chronicler was anything but "reckless of the distinction between Yahwe and Elohim" (p. 151), as Baumgärtel has clearly shown; nor is it true that "when writing independently, he evinces a preference for Elohim" (p. 150); on the contrary, he very much prefers Adonai, which he spells YHWH. It is not at all certain that "neither sense nor grammar is ever affected by the substitution of one [divine] name for another" (p. 168). Skinner is right in retaining Yahwe in Gen. 16 11 against Dahse and Wiener; the appellative correlate of Yahwe was *el*, "a god" (cf. Nu. 23 f.), and Elohim is neither here nor there in this passage. And the case of Gen. 28 20, where Skinner (p. 42) actually concedes to Dahse that Yahwe should be substituted for Elohim, is by no means clear; since even an Elohist narrative could not avoid Yahwe in verse 21. But in Gen. 12 7b, and again in 16 13, the grammar imperatively demands that Yahwe be replaced by *ha-el*, "the god." Ex. 3 14 f. (unlike Ex. 6 2 f.) does not record the "revelation" of the name Yahwe (p. 28); the whole point of the disclosure of the name to Moses is that it is the name by which the patriarchs had worshipped that deity in times past, and which would perhaps be remembered among their descendants in Egypt. It was to avoid that natural assumption that P supplied the patriarchs with the proper name El Shaddai.

On page 155 Skinner has amusingly furnished better evidence than he knew of the ease with which κύριος and θεός were confused

by the copyists. He has himself read *κύριος* for *ὁ θεός* in a statement of Dahse, with the consequence that he is forced to confess that "the meaning of this paragraph eludes his comprehension," and devotes a paragraph of his own to a bewildered assault upon an imaginary position. One is reminded of the French Deputy haranguing his constituents on the subject of corruption in public life: "So extensive and pervasive, my fellow citizens, is this evil of which I speak, that even I who stand here to address you upon the subject have not wholly escaped it!"

Dahse is admittedly an expert and indefatigable Septuagintal statistician. But statistics are of less than no value—they cumber the ground and clog the mind—except as they serve to verify or to invalidate an hypothesis precipitated by the sound historical sense of a competent investigator. In criticism as in natural science, the thing to be proved is of more importance than the proof, and is, moreover, not to be arrived at without the gift of the spirit. An ounce of Wellhausen's hypothesis, however much modification it may ultimately require, is worth more to Biblical science than tons of Dahse's "facts," the bearing of which remains to be shown. To be sure, the latter has his own hypotheses; but thus far their only service, to those hardy enough to toil in their train, has been to make the plain places rough. "Textual" criticism, like any other, must tend to simplify, or else it is not true.

Nevertheless, this controversy has not been without its value. It has unintentionally brought into notice the fact that the criticism of the last fifty years has left the question of the divine names in Genesis, and throughout the Old Testament, somewhat in the air. Unless one is dealing with inscriptions or original autographs, not even textual problems can be decided without a knowledge of the exact purport of the words under consideration. And if Yahwe and Elohim are indeed characteristic of two distinct yet fairly contemporaneous sources—the practice of P is artificial and perfectly transparent—one cannot help asking, How comes each source to employ its peculiar designation of one and the same deity? Or again, if Yahwe and Elohim have not the same semasiological value, why may not one writer, or any number of writers, employ now one vocable and now the other, according to the needs of the context or the mood of the moment? The circumstance that "*Majestät*," "*Der Kaiser*," and "*Wilhelm der Zweite*" are all used in Germany to allude to one and the same person, is not the slightest justification for assuming that their semasiological values are equal and identical or that the expressions are interchangeable. Except in

certain contexts, "*Wilhelm der Zweite*" in the mouth of a court chamberlain at the Schloss in Berlin would occasion surprise; while "*Majestät*" in the mouth of a street-vendor would be ludicrous.

It is high time this whole subject was tackled seriously and systematically. Both "textual" and "higher" critics have been operating with symbols of uncertain and to some extent mistaken value. Skinner habitually speaks of Elohim as if it were the equivalent of Yahwe, and indicates that El differed from both only in being "an archaic name for the Deity which had ceased to form part of the ordinary spoken language before these narratives were reduced to writing" (p. 106). If he had said that El was essentially an indeterminate appellative and originally associated with a polytheistic conception of Yahwe which our Old Testament has done its best to obscure, he would have been nearer the fact. Driver's treatment of the subject (*Genesis*, p. 403) is more befogging than enlightening, if only because he spells "god" with a capital. As to Elohim, Wiener is quite right in criticising Skinner for treating it as a proper name; but he is wrong in assuming that it was a plain appellative. When used of a single deity, it was a circumlocutory title, which in pre-exilic times was more or less consciously employed as such. The classical Hebrew appellative for "a god" was *el*, and for the determinate "the god" it was *ha-el*. *Elohim* is the indeterminate plural, "gods," which necessarily did duty when the generic idea of "divinity" was to be expressed, whether substantively or (in the genitive) adjectively. And the generic "Divinity" as the designation of a single deity is of course not a plain appellative. It may well be that the customary use of "Divinity" instead of Yahwe implied—like German "*Majestät*"—a certain degree of sophistication, which naturally went hand in hand with other marks of sophistication, and so may serve to characterize and identify an individual source or writer.

Enough has been said to indicate the nature of the studies demanded for the scientific and definitive settlement of the question of "the divine names in Genesis." It is not likely that the findings will have any serious effect upon the documentary theory, in so far as this distinguishes between Nationalist, Deuteronomic, and Levitical sources; though they may modify existing tenets as to the first of these elements. Whatever the outcome, a solid foundation must be laid; and a good beginning in that direction is furnished by Baumgärtel in the methodical little volume whose title appears at the head of this review.

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